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Message Text

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ACTION CU-04

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8112

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 7182

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SCUL, TECH, MX
SUBJECT: TECHNICAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY RICHARDSON FROM MCBRIDE

1. WITH REGARD TO OUR CONVERSATION IN THE DEPARTMENT LAST WEEK WHERE I INDICATED TO YOU THAT THE TECHNICAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM MIGHT BE RAISED IN THE OCTOBER BILATERAL CULTURAL TALKS BY THE MEXICANS, I HAVE THE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS:

2. AFTER PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA'S INAUGURATION, DECEMBER 1, 1970, THE FIRST MATTER WHICH FOREIGN SECRETARY RABASA CALLED ME ABOUT WAS THE DESIRABILITY, INDEED NECESSITY, OF AN EXCHANGE OF TECHNICIANS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. HE MENTIONED THE FIGURE OF ONE HUNDRED IN EACH DIRECTION AS DESIRABLE AND MADE CLEAR THE PRESIDENT'S PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT IN THIS PROGRAM.

3. THEREAFTER SIMILAR PROGRAMS WERE ANNOUNCED WITH OTHER COUNTRIES AND CONSIDERABLE PUBLICITY WAS GIVEN FOR INSTANCE TO THE ARRIVAL OF THE FIRST JAPANESE TECHNICAL STUDENTS IN MEXICO UNDER A BILATERAL PROGRAM OF THIS NATURE.

4. OUR OWN RESPONSE TO ECHEVERRIA'S REQUEST WAS DELAYED BECAUSE OF VARIOUS TECHNICAL PROBLEMS AND AN AGREEMENT WAS NOT SIGNED UNTIL JUNE 15, 1972 IN WASHINGTON BETWEEN SECRETARIES ROGERS AND RABASA DURING THE VISIT OF PRESIDENT
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ECHEVERRIA TO PRESIDENT NIXON.

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5. SINCE THE SIGNING OF THE AGREEMENT, THERE HAS BEEN NO PROGRESS WHATEVER IN THE DIRECTION OF SENDING U.S. TECHNICAL STUDENTS TO MEXICO FOR THE SIMPLE REASON THAT THERE IS NO BUDGETARY PROVISION FOR SUCH A PROGRAM. IT IS PROVIDED IN THE AGREEMENT THAT THE SENDING STATE WILL PAY THE BASIC EXPENSES OF ITS PERSONNEL.

6. WITH REGARD TO THE SENDING OF MEXICANS TO THE U.S., APPROXIMATELY TWENTY HAVE GONE AND HAVE BEEN TAKEN CARE OF. HOWEVER EVEN THIS RELATIVELY SMALL NUMBER HAS CAUSED TREMENDOUS DIFFICULTUBS, NOT BECAUSE OF THEIR PERSONALITIES BUT BECAUSE OF THE ABSENCE OF ANY MACHINERY FOR HANDLING THIS PROGRAM. THE OFFICE OF MEXICAN AFFAIRS WHICH HAS NO FUNDS OR PERSONNEL FOR THIS PURPOSE HAS HANDLED THE BULK OF THE WORK SIMPLY IN THE OVERALL INTERESTS OF U.S.-MEXICAN RELATIONS AND KNOWING THE IMPORTANCE WHICH PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA ATTACHES TO THE PROGRAM.

7. COMMENT: I WOULD THEREFORE RECOMMEND THAT YOU BE IN POSITION DURING YOUR DISCUSSIONS HERE TO STATE THAT YOU ARE AWARE OF THE DIFFICULTIES WHICH HAVE ARISEN AND THAT YOU WILL SEEK TO HAVE THE DEPARTMENT REQUEST THE FUNDS WHICH WILL BE REQUIRED FOR SENDING US STUDENTS TO MEXICO AND FOR MEETING THE LESSER EXPENSES WHICH WILL INEVITABLY ARISE IN PLACING THE MEXICAN STUDENTS IN THE U.S. I BELIEVE AN INDICATION OF A POSITIVE ATTITUDE BY THE DEPARTMENT DURING YOUR VISIT HERE NEXT MONTH WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL IN OUR OVERALL RELATIONS. EMBASSY WILL OF COURSE BE GLAD TO FURNISH ALL POSSIBLE DATA REGARDING COST OF FUNDING PROGRAM.
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